

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:12 p.m. at the Bank One Ballpark. In his remarks, he referred to Cindy McCain, wife of Senator

John McCain; Caryl K. L. Kyl, wife of Senator Jon L. Kyl; and entertainer Aaron Tippin.

**Statement on Signing the Military Construction Appropriations and
Emergency Hurricane Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2005**
October 13, 2004

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 4837, the “Military Construction Appropriations and Emergency Hurricane Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2005.” This Act provides funding for construction to support the operations of the U.S. Armed Forces and for military family housing. The Act also provides the funds I requested to help citizens in Florida and elsewhere rebuild their lives in the aftermath of multiple hurricanes and other natural disasters.

Sections 107, 110, 113, 118, and 303 of the Act provide for notice to the Congress of relocation of activities between military installations, initiation of a new installation abroad, U.S. military exercises involving \$100,000 in construction costs, specific actions to encourage foreign nations to assume a greater share of the common defense burden, and initiation of certain types of programs. The Supreme Court of the United States has stated that the President’s authority to classify and control access to information bearing on national security flows from the Constitution and does not depend upon a legislative grant of authority. Although notice can be provided in most situations as a matter of comity, situations may arise, especially in wartime, in which the President must act promptly under his constitutional grants of executive power and authority as Commander in Chief while protecting sensitive national security information. The executive branch shall construe these sections in a manner

consistent with the constitutional authority of the President.

Section 128 of the Act purports to require Department of Defense officials to respond in writing within 21 days to any question or inquiry from the congressional military construction appropriations subcommittees. The executive branch shall construe section 128 in a manner consistent with the President’s constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and to withhold information the disclosure of which could impair foreign relations, the national security, the deliberative processes of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive’s constitutional duties.

The executive branch shall construe section 110(d)(2) of the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act as contained in Division C of the Act, relating to submission of legislative recommendations, in a manner consistent with the President’s exclusive constitutional authority to recommend for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 13, 2004.

NOTE: H.R. 4837, approved October 13, was assigned Public Law No. 108–324. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One October 14, 2004

The President. How is everybody? Ballsy [Dan Balz, Washington Post].

Q. Mr. President, how are you?

The President. Were you anticipating my arrival? [Laughter] Listen, 19 days to go, and I'm looking forward to it. I enjoyed myself last night. The debate phase of the campaign is over, and now it's a sprint to the finish. And the good news is I'm not going to be sprinting alone. I'll have a lot of support from people like Senator McCain and Governor Lingle. We'll be seeing Governors today in Las Vegas, and they're going to spread out all across the country, and I'm excited about it. It's—my spirits are high. I'm enthusiastic about my chances.

I'll answer a couple of questions, and then we'll let you have your coffee.

Presidential Debate in Tempe

Q. Some of the early polls say Kerry won last night. What do you have to say?

The President. Well, the voters will decide. They'll decide on November the 2d who they want to be the President.

Q. Has Kerry helped himself with these debates, if you have an opinion?

The President. The voters will decide that. You know, that's—the great thing about a campaign, all the speculation ends on election day.

Senator John McCain. Can I just say, on substance, there is no doubt. When you talk about Social Security, they all want to reform it. You don't know how to pay for it. You can't answer the question, and people notice that. On substance, the President won, and that's what the people think about when they go into the ballot booth.

Can I also say at that event afterwards, 40,000 citizens of Arizona showed up at Bank One Ballpark. There has never been an event like that in the history of our

State, not only the numbers but the enthusiasm.

Q. Mr. President, what do you think your best moment was last night?

The President. Telling people what I think. You know, the pundits and the spinners and the—they'll all have their opinion, but there's only one opinion that matters, and that's the opinion of the American people on November the 2d. I feel great about where we are. There's lot of enthusiasm for my candidacy. People have seen me lead, and they also know that I've got plans for the next 4 years. And as you'll hear me today, I'm optimistic about the future of this country.

Governor Linda Lingle. I thought that a great moment was the question about jobs. It's more than statistics. I think the President made a key point when he said the important point is that a solid education for the children in America is the best way to ensure a sound economy over the long term. It's common sense. It's why No Child Left Behind is not just important for education, it's important for the sustained economic progress of this Nation.

And personally, the part I liked is when the President talked about his feelings for Mrs. Bush and his daughters. I thought that was just so touching. I think people across America felt how close they were as a family, and I thought it was a really important part of the debate as well.

The President. All right, I'm going to let you all go back to your breakfast.

Senator McCain. Can I just mention one thing? Again, on Social Security, the President has pledged to reform Social Security and bring America together on that issue. You can't just say that the status quo will prevail on Social Security. Millions and millions of baby boomers are going to be facing retirement. This is an issue that has